

rebuild. We are not talking about war damage. That is a tiny fraction of the cost. This is a guide to the gold-plated construction and war profiteering that the administration has put forward for Iraq.

There is no sum too great. Six billion dollars, not to repair the damage to their electrical grid but to update their 1950s and 1960s boilers and generators to 2003 standards and all the other disinvestments. Six billion dollars the American taxpayers will be asked to borrow to give them the state-of-the-art energy grid when lights are blinking out in this country and our rates are going up.

No idea is too tangential. The Bush Administration wishes the Iraqis to have wireless Internet. They did not have it before the war. I do not think they even had laptops. Maybe a few of the elite did. But they are going to have it after the war. They are going to have wireless Internet paid for, money borrowed, in the name of the American taxpayer.

And then, finally, nothing is too wasteful when it comes to this administration. Mr. Bremer, the pro-consul, signed a contract to feed the 25 members of the Iraqi Governing Council handpicked by Mr. Bremer and the President for a mere \$5,000 per day.

□ 1830

Apparently the food was going to be flown in on an executive jet from some exclusive restaurant in Washington, DC or New York. I do not know how they could spend \$5,000 a day for 25 people. The Iraqi Council canceled that and generally said, "You know, when it comes to reconstruction or feeding ourselves or doing all these other things, help us do it, and we can do it for 10 cents on the dollar." They are aghast at what we are wasting.

The major point is when it comes to this administration, no sum is too much when it comes to war profiteering and gold-plated construction in Iraq. But it is too easy for them to neglect our troops.

We find out that 30,000 of our troops lack body armor. They have been issued flak vests from the Vietnam era. It will not stop an AK-47 bullet. It would cost \$15 million to equip those troops with vests, but the Pentagon, which got \$79 billion last spring to equip the troops in the war and had a budget of nearly \$400 billion last year, said it could not find within that budget, \$15 million to give our young men and women those vests. So now, in order to equip those young men and women with the vests they should have had before they went there, they are asking for \$300 million. What is this? Yes, \$15 million worth of vests are needed, and the Pentagon said they want a \$300 million appropriation to do that.

But it does not stop there. Some of our troops are over there in their jungle fatigues. Many of them are driving Humvees that have either canvas side

curtains or sheet metal doors, which do not do real well with AK-47 bullets or rocket-propelled grenades. Now, they finally came to the conclusion that we should buy some armored Humvees for those troops.

The boots, the substandard boots they purchased are wearing out. Some of the troops are wearing jungle fatigues. We cannot afford those desert fatigues for everybody. A \$400 billion budget, \$79 billion last spring, another \$79 billion now. Some of those people are going to have to go over there in their jungle fatigues, wear that Vietnam era flak jacket, drive around in Humvees with canvas side curtains.

But yesterday the Bush administration decided they are going to get this all right and fix it. So they appointed Condoleezza Rice to oversee Mr. Bremer, the pro-consul in Iraq, and see if they can do these things better in the future.

I have a suggestion for Pro-Consul Bremer and his overseer, Ms. Rice: Why do not they go over there, looking like a target, wearing jungle fatigues, and wear a Vietnam era flak jacket and drive a Humvee with canvas side curtains, instead of going around in their armor-plated Suburbans, surrounded by Bradley Fighting Vehicles with helicopters overhead, and they say they have been there and are doing what the troops need.

The troops are not getting what they need, and we are wasting billions to rebuild that country.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MURPHY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FEENEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FEENEY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FILNER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

LETTERS FROM HOME REGARDING IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, 165 years ago, conservatives in the House of Representatives passed a rule to pro-

hibit and ban the discussion of the debate of slavery in the House of Representatives. Then Congressman, former President, John Quincy Adams, strongly objecting to that policy passed by the conservatives that ran this House of Representatives, came to the floor night after night, week after week, disputing that rule and reading letters from his constituents, mostly women in Massachusetts, who could not vote, sharing letters from his constituents with the House of Representatives and with the American people protesting that prohibition on that debate.

Today, the Congress is considering other very important legislation, other legislation and investigations, something the House of Representatives conservative leadership does not want to allow, and that is debate on how this \$87 billion will be spent and accounted for, whether or not the Bush administration told the truth when leading this Congress and country into war with Iraq and how we are going to take care of the troops.

I am again tonight, as I have night after night since late July, reading letters from my constituents, because conservative Republican leadership in this House will not allow us to debate these issues and will not do the investigation that the country and so many of my constituents are demanding. I am reading letters from them tonight about the troops, about the lack of accountability on the \$87 billion and the \$1 billion a week we are already spending.

Jane from Akron, Ohio, writes, "Do not put good money after bad. I implore you to look at the U.S. servicemen and women in Iraq and Afghanistan and see that they are treated decently in terms of danger pay, education for their dependents and family support issues. The Bush administration is certainly not supporting the troops with decency and respect."

She is talking about some of the same things my friend the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) just talked about.

Evelyn from Akron, Ohio, writes, "This administration has bankrupted the country. Please vote against the \$87 billion unless the people responsible are held accountable."

She talks about, as many other letters have, the fact that we are spending \$1 billion a week in Iraq. One-third of that money has gone to private contractors, many of them unbid contracts. The largest contract has gone to the Halliburton company, which Vice President DICK CHENEY was CEO of until he was running for Vice President, and she and others talk about the fact that Mr. CHENEY is still receiving \$13,000 every month from Halliburton, as Halliburton is receiving hundreds of millions in unbid contracts, hundreds of millions of our tax dollars.

Wes of Strongsville, Ohio, writes, "It is beyond belief that this administration has gone so long, nearly 5 months

since the 'end of major combat,' without a plan on accomplishing its initial goals in Iraq and keeping our soldiers from another quagmire."

Wesley of Bath, Ohio, writes, "I am very sad that George Bush and his staff, including Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld and Condoleezza Rice, apparently misled us when taking us to war. We need to publicly investigate how the public was misled about the reasons for going into this war. If the President and his people are culpable, they should be let go."

Betty from Akron, Ohio, writes, "We need to end the U.S. occupation of Iraq and give authority for rebuilding to the United Nations. No more money from Congress until there is a change."

She and others have suggested that President Bush bring in more United Nations troops, more United Nations financial support, something the President has been unable to do, in large part because many around the world, as in this country, have not really believed that the President has told us the truth, and so many of our countrymen, so many of my constituents, have objected to this \$1 billion a week with no accountability, especially when \$13,000 every month is still going to the Vice President of the United States from a company that is getting millions of dollars in unbid contracts from the President of the United States.

Shirley from Akron, Ohio, writes, "We can no longer afford to go it alone in our nation-building in Iraq and still care for America's pressing social issues, most specifically, our children's education, health care and high unemployment from the loss of American jobs. The hubris of this administration's policies at home and abroad will cost America for decades to come. It must stop now."

She is talking about the President's tax cuts for the wealthiest citizens. The average millionaire gets a \$93,000 tax cut, while the President has cut veterans' benefits, and he is not taking care of our troops in Iraq and the supplies they need. The President has cut education and health care benefits also.

Claire from Strongsville, Ohio, writes, "The level of debt increases daily as we keep reducing services for needy children. It can only get worse as we throw more money into the unjust Iraq war."

You can see, letter writer after letter writer, citizen after citizen in this country, have major concerns about the corruption, the unaccountability, the money the Vice President is still receiving and our whole war policy.

RUBBER-STAMPING THE ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor tonight because I

know that we are going to next week be in a session of the "Rubber Stamp Congress." Tomorrow the Committee on Appropriations will meet for several hours, and they will pass out \$87 billion worth of borrowed money.

I brought this because in my district one of my constituents started printing up what he calls "fraudulent event notes." This is a \$1 billion note in "deception dollars."

Now, 87 of those look something like this. That is what we are going to put out tomorrow, \$87 billion of hard-earned money, with very little discussion, and the President wants them to run it through this House next week. We will come in on Wednesday. We will fly in on Wednesday afternoon; on Thursday we will have a little debate; and Thursday it will be gone. Two, three hours of debate, \$87 billion.

Now, when you think about that, this Rubber Stamp Congress never says no to this President. It is a failed policy, with the same people in charge today that got us in the mess. Oh, they have rearranged the deck chairs on the Titanic. Ms. Rice is now in charge. She sort of elbowed Colin Powell off to one side, and Mr. Rumsfeld off to the other side, and she is running in and telling Mr. Bremer what to do, the Viceroy we appointed over there to run this place.

What is missing in all of this is a plan to give the control of Iraq to the Iraqis. They say someday. Five years, we are going to be doing this for 5 years. In one year, we have been in here for \$79 billion, and now we are back for \$87 billion more, all borrowed.

We cannot touch those tax cuts. Oh, no, we gave that money to the rich people, and, I do not know, they are doing something with it somewhere. They are not making jobs. We have got no jobs in this country. But we are printing money. The presses are running like mad printing this money to send over to Iraq.

Now, what are we going to send it there for? You heard from one of my colleagues a little bit of it. We are going to send over a guard system for public property, \$15 million. That is just for training and administration.

We are going to send them 80 pickup trucks at \$2.6 million. That is \$33,000 apiece. That is a pretty good pickup truck. You can get a pickup truck for under \$20,000 right now. But, no, we have to send them the \$33,000 brand.

We are going to send over a communications system of handheld radios, 400 of them, and 200 satellite telephones, for \$6 million. How many of your police departments have that kind of equipment? And yet we can send it over to Iraq.

Or we can go and give security for the judges at \$200 million. Four hundred judges. We are going to provide security details constantly for \$200 million.

These phony dollars that they got us into, they got us into a war on a fraudulent basis. The President stood right here and said things which he now

says, "My, it wasn't true." But we are going to pay for it.

We are going to pay for a witness protection program. If any Iraqis come forward, we promise them that we will take them to the United States and set them up someplace in Florida or wherever, I do not know, and spend \$100 million on them, like they were crime fighters in the Mafia in the United States.

That is what your money is going for.

Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of things in this country that ought to happen before that happens.

We are going to buy them 200 tanker trucks. We are going to buy them 250 natural gas trucks. More of these dollars. They are going out. They are going out to the people, and they are going to be spent over there, and the Iraqis themselves say, "Give us 10 cents on the dollar, and we can do it ourselves." But this is an American occupation headed by Viceroy Bremer, and there is no intention in this list of turning over control to them.

We are going to set them up an army. We have decided they need a 40,000-man army. They had an army before. Where is it? Why do we have to buy new weapons for all of them?

Four hundred thirty-five Members are going to come in here with their rubber stamp, and they are going to say, "Mr. President, you want it. I close my eyes, it is yours." And we are going to send them \$87 billion, with no discussion. It is wrong. Keep your eye on them.

□ 1845

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MURPHY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MEEK of Florida addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BEREUTER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.)

THE NEED FOR RELIABLE, ACCESSIBLE, AND VERIFIABLE VOTING METHODS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to follow my friend, the gentleman